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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/FO, AF/S

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SUBJECT: SADC: AF DAS PAGE'S FEB 8 MEETINGS WITH SENIOR UK OFFICIALS

Classified By: Political Counselor Robin Quinville,  
reasons 1.4 (b/d).

**¶1.** (C) Summary. Senior UK Foreign Office (FCO), Department for International Development (DFID), and Number 10 (No10) Africa officials told AF DAS Page during February 8 meetings that de-listing some entities in Zimbabwe was necessary because of timing and in order to maintain EU consensus. They also believed that South Africa could do more on Zimbabwe. In advance of South African President Zuma's March 2-3 state visit to the UK, UK officials are working on deliverables for the visit that will focus on employment, education, climate change, and urban re-generation; the visit will also include a trip to the London 2012 Olympic Site and several people-to-people meetings in urban areas. With the Group of 19 in Mozambique's linking of corruption and governance issues to direct budget support, the UK has received pressure from the Governments of Mozambique and Portugal to continue support at current levels and has also noticed some positive responses on governance, though they continue to debate the issue internally. Governance trends in Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, and Swaziland are worrisome. Such trendlines have caused DFID to grapple with how to handle countries where economic progress has been good but where democratic space has been reducing, which will be a major focus issue for DFID in 2010. DFID will also have a renewed focus on management of natural resources. UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown continues to be focused on health -- especially maternal health and ending payment of user fees for health services -- and universal primary education. End summary.

**¶2.** (SBU) AF DAS Susan Page held separate meetings on February 8 with FCO Southern and West Africa Department Head Janet Douglas, FCO Zimbabwe Unit Head John Dennis, DFID Southern and West Africa Head Beverley Warmington, and the Prime Minister's Special Advisor for Africa Brendan Cox.

Zimbabwe

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**¶3.** (C/NF) After offering his analysis of the situation on the ground and of Global Peace Agreement (GPA) implementation, Dennis said the UK hopes to see South African President Jacob Zuma do more on Zimbabwe, as South Africa has a vested interest in a long-term bilateral relationship, has felt the impact on the region, and is currently hosting many Zimbabweans within its borders. While agreeing that the political reforms called for in the GPA had not been implemented, Dennis provided a robust defense to the UK's decision to support within the EU the de-listing of eight parastatals and a limited number of individuals, arguing that the parastatals are now separate from Mugabe's power structures and saying that the individuals were either dead or no longer associating with ZANU-PF. Dennis also noted that the UK's research failed to determine the reasons the eight companies had been included on the sanctions list in the

first place. He said the messaging around the de-listing would be very important, especially given that the IMF Board may vote around the same time to restore Zimbabwe's voting rights. Offering his impromptu thinking on what the EU's messaging would be, Dennis said he thought the EU statement would "recognize" the progress on the economic front and express "disappointment" on the lack of progress on the political reforms. He said the UK will continue to push for "tough language" in the EU on Zimbabwe, while acknowledging that there are no major levers of power to induce reform.

¶4. (C/NF) Warmington said the debate in DFID on relaxing restrictive measures within the EU had been more robust, as Development Secretary Douglas Alexander, not normally involved in sanctions discussions, inserted himself into the process, much to the annoyance of the FCO. In the end, Warmington said the pressure from Zimbabwe Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and Finance Minister Tendai Biti as well as the time constraints on passing a new package before the existing measures expired, resulted in the de-listings. Warmington said the World Bank Trust Fund for Zimbabwe was becoming a "nightmare" because the World Bank will not recognize restrictive measures and the UK cannot donate to the fund if assistance will go to sanctioned entities. She said donors plan to write to World Bank President Zoellick to request a change in operating procedures, or donors will have to create the Trust Fund with the African Development Bank.

¶5. (C/NF) Cox said the Prime Minister is worried about the "next bit of reform" for Zimbabwe, as the most contentious political issues are the ones outstanding. He described the EU's de-listing as necessary in order to keep all EU partners

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on board, especially given the time constraints in approving a new package before the existing one expires.

South Africa

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¶6. (C/NF) Douglas said her primary focus at the moment is preparation for South African President Jacob Zuma's state visit to the UK in the first week of March. She said the visit will focus on employment, education, climate change, and urban re-generation and will include a visit to the London 2012 Olympic Site and several people-to-people meetings in urban areas. Douglas said Number Ten is looking for deliverables, particular on Zimbabwe, but predicts a series of statements is the most likely outcome. She said that during a recent visit South African Sports Minister Makhenkesi Stofile had said that crowd control and human security are his biggest concerns related to the upcoming World Cup. Douglas said the UK's Metropolitan Police and Serious Organized Crime Agency (SOCA) are providing assistance and technical support to help manage these issues. Douglas also said she is looking at child trafficking in connection with the games, as she has heard informally that networks in southern Africa are increasing trafficking into South Africa in advance of the World Cup.

¶7. (C/NF) Warmington said South Africa is a regional hub for DFID's activities, as DFID only has limited bilateral programming in South Africa, including on HIV/AIDS and infrastructure. She also acknowledged the UK government's difficulty in determining outcomes for the state visit. Cox highlighted Zuma's state visit as important for the bilateral relationship but said that the Prime Minister wants to discuss Zimbabwe with Zuma in addition to how to carry forward work on G20 issues. Warmington, however, did not see a "deliverable" from Zuma on Zimbabwe during the State visit.

Mozambique

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¶8. (C/NF) Douglas said the UK has been under pressure from the Government of Mozambique -- and the Portuguese

bilaterally -- to continue the Group of 19's funding at current levels. She said the Group of 19 had decided to link corruption and lack of progress on governance issues, especially on electoral reform and separation of party and state, to support levels by asking for the Government of Mozambique to give donors a game plan of reform. Warmington, however, said she had become less concerned about governance, especially with regard to the rest of the region, after her recent visit there. She said the group of donors had felt "ignored" by the Government of Mozambique, which resulted in the tough messaging. She said she does not currently foresee a situation where the UK's assistance level or framework would change, as the Government of Mozambique appeared to be responding to the issues. She also said the conversation between the international community and the Government of Mozambique should be with the entire donor community, not just the Group of 19.

Malawi

19. (C/NF) Douglas said Malawi has "consistently been a pain" on governance issues and with the recent gay rights case. She offered that the referral of the case to the constitutional court would give Malawi time to maneuver politically, which would probably be helpful. She also agreed that the governance trends are worrying, especially with the sidelining of Vice President Joyce Banda. While the President's brother Peter Mutharika may be "more progressive," his potential appointment as the ruling party's presidential candidate could be problematic with regard to governance issues. Warmington said that DFID had been very "disappointed" by Malawi's purchasing of a plane off budget and said that Development Secretary Douglas Alexander had decided to reduce its assistance by the value of the airplane divided over the next five years, approximately USD 3 million per year.

Encouraging Good Governance

10. (C/NF) Douglas agreed that governance in Zambia, Lesotho and Swaziland is also worrying. Warmington said that DFID is currently grappling with how to handle countries where economic progress has been good but where democratic space has been reducing, such as Zambia and Ethiopia. She said this will be a major issue for DFID in 2010. She also said

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there will be a renewed focus on management of natural resources.

The PM's Priorities: Education and Health

11. (C/NF) Cox said that health -- especially maternal health and ending payment of user fees for health services -- and universal primary education continue to be major focuses for the Prime Minister. He highlighted the education initiatives around the World Cup and said the UK is working on strategies and is seeking funding for various initiatives.

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